

REMARKS

In the outstanding Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 21-30, 32-47, 49-64, 66-81, and 83-88 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,662,337 to Brink ("Brink") in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,392,299 to Rhines et al. ("Rhines"); and objected to claims 31, 48, 65, and 82 as depending from a rejected base claim, but otherwise containing allowable subject matter.

By this amendment, Applicants have amended claims 21-27, 29, 32-44, 46, 49-61, 63, 66-78, 80, and 83-88, and have canceled claims 28, 30, 31, 45, 47, 48, 62, 64, 65, 79, 81, and 82. Claims 21-27, 29, 32-44, 46, 49-61, 63, 66-78, 80, and 83-88 are now pending in this application.

Initially, Applicants gratefully acknowledge the indication of allowable subject matter in claims 31, 48, 65, and 82.

Additionally, Applicants appreciate the courtesy extended to Applicants' representative in the interview of September 14, 2006. In the interview, Applicants' representative inquired concerning the status of claims 34, 35, 51, 52, 68, 69, 85, and 86, which were not specifically addresses in the Office Action. The Examiner apologized for not specifically addressing these claims, and indicated that the claims were also subject to a rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Brink in view of Rhines.

Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection of claims 21-27, 29, 32-44, 46, 49-61, 63, 66-78, 80, and 83-88 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a). However, in an attempt to expedite prosecution, Applicants have amended claims 21, 38, 55, and 72 to include the

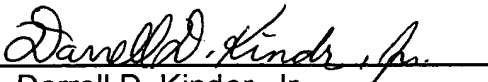
allowable subject matter of claims 31, 48, 65, and 82. Accordingly, Applicants submit that claims 21, 38, 55, and 72, and all claims dependent therefrom, are allowable over the cited references. Applicants therefore respectfully request reconsideration of this application and the timely allowance of the pending claims.

Please grant any extensions of time required to enter this response and charge any additional required fees to our deposit account 06-0916.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dated: September 27, 2006

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